2. (Unchanged) The method of Claim 1, wherein the first and second licenses each share a unique identifier to associate the first and second licenses with the first computer.

3. (Amended) The method of Claim 1, further comprising digitally signing the first and second licenses.

4. (Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein obtaining from the second computer the second license further comprises:

connecting to the second computer,

providing the second computer with at least a portion of the first license, and

exchanging the first license for the second license.

5. (Amended) The method of Claim 4, wherein connecting to the second computer comprises connecting to the second computer via a communications network.

6. (Unchanged) The method of Claim 5, wherein the communications network is the internet.

7. (Amended) The method of Claim 5, wherein exchanging the first license for the second license includes formatting data from the first license according to a set of text processing rules and transmitting the formatted data using a text transfer protocol.

8. (Twice Amended) The method of Claim 2, wherein replacing the first license with the second license further comprises:

matching the unique identifier of the second license to the unique identifier of the first license, and if no matching occurs, discarding the second license without replacing the first license, and

authenticating the digital signature of the second license, and if authentication fails, discarding the second license without replacing the first license.

9. (Unchanged) The method of Claim 1, further comprising verifying whether the replaced license is valid, including determining whether the replaced license has expired.

10. (Amended) The method of Claim 3, wherein digitally signing the first and second licenses includes applying a message digest algorithm to a portion of the license not including a length of the license or the digital signature, resulting in a message digest, the message digest being further encrypted with a binary key extracted from the unique identifier.

13. (Twice Amended) An article of manufacture comprising:

a machine-accessible medium including thereon sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause an electronic system to:

generate, on a first computer, a first license for software installed on the first computer, the first license valid for a first predetermined period of time stored on the first computer;

generate, on a second computer, a second license for the installed software, the second license valid for a second predetermined period of time stored on the second computer;

obtain from the second computer the second license; and

replace the first license with the second license.

25. (Unchanged) The computer-readable medium of Claim 13, wherein the first and second licenses each share a unique identifier to associate the first and second licenses with the first computer.

26. (Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 13, wherein the machine-accessible medium further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to:

digitally sign the first and second licenses.

27. (Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 13, wherein the sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to obtain from the second computer the second license further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to:

connect to the second computer;

provide the second computer with at least a portion of the first license; and

exchange the first license for the second license.

28. (Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 27, wherein the sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to connect to the second computer comprise sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to connect to the second computer via a communications network.

29. (Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 28, wherein the sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to connect to the second computer via the communications network comprise sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to connect to the second computer via the internet.

30. (Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 25, wherein the sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to replace the first license with the second license further comprise sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to:

match the unique identifier of the second license to the unique identifier of the first license, and if no match occurs, to discard the second license without replacing the first license, and

authenticate the digital signature of the second license, and if authentication fails, to discard the second license without replacing the first license.

31.   (Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 13, wherein the machine-accessible medium further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to verify whether the replaced license is valid, including determining whether the replaced license has expired.

32.   (Amended) The article of manufacture of Claim 26 wherein the sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to digitally sign the first and second licenses includes sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to apply a message digest algorithm to a portion of the license not including a length of the license or the digital signature, resulting in a message digest, the message digest being further encrypted with a binary key extracted from the unique identifier.

33.   (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

selectively refreshing the second license prior to expiration of the second predetermined period of time.

34.   (New) The article of manufacture of claim 13, wherein the machine-accessible medium further comprises sequences of instructions that, when executed, cause the electronic system to:

selectively refresh the second license prior to expiration of the second predetermined period of time.